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## ABSTRACT

Enrollment trends at church-related colleges during 1965-1975 were studied to determine to what extent they continue to attract American youth. It appears that the present condition and future prospects of these institutions is not as precarious as some observers have asserted, and that the educational and fiscal health of church-related colleges will in large part depend on their tenacity in holding to the basic religious, spiritual, and moral principles that animated their establishment. Church support and government financial aid to students who choose these colleges and universities will also be important in assuring their survival and educational quality. But the schools will have to represent an attractive option to young people in order to compete successfully. (Author/MSE)

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ARE CHURCH-RELATED COLLEGES  
LOSING STUDENTS?

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## **ARE CHURCH-RELATED COLLEGES LOSING STUDENTS?**

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Topical Paper No. 6

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## ARE CHURCH-RELATED COLLEGES LOSING STUDENTS?\*

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the American enterprise of higher education is its combination of institutions supported primarily by private financial resources and others sustained from tax funds.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, from the establishment of Harvard in 1636 until the latter half of the nineteenth century, the privately supported colleges and universities were founded, funded, and largely controlled by boards of trustees who were members of various religious denominations. Even as recently as 1950, half of the students in institutions of higher education in this country were enrolled in privately supported establishments and a large percentage of these young people attended colleges which retained at least a nominal affiliation with a specific church body such as the Roman Catholics, Methodists, Southern Baptists, and Presbyterians.

In the conviction that the so-called church-related college or university has constituted an indispensable element in American higher education from the formative days of our national life and that its services are crucially needed in this day of confusion about personal and social goal, the authors decided to study enrollment trends at these institutions over the past decade to determine to what extent they continue to attract American youth.

This effort was further prompted by frequent statements in the public press, as well as in professional publications, suggesting that the institutions which continue to abide by their founding religious purposes offer programs and a life-style less and less attractive to today's American youth. These opinions have often led the general public to conclude that the church-related college has become a disappearing academic species. The facts related to enrollments permit no such generalization. These prognosticators failed to take into consideration the significant fact (overshadowed by the large growth in enrollments in public institutions—especially community colleges) that though the rate of growth in attendance in private institutions has slowed in relation to the public sector since 1950, the number of enrollees has increased considerably. The **percentage** of students choosing to enroll at public institutions in the recent period of rapid expansion has, to be sure, risen from approximately fifty in 1950 to seventy-five in 1975. Nevertheless, the **total** degree-credit enrollment at their private counterparts during the same period has more than doubled, rising from 1,064,024 to 2,185,122.<sup>2</sup> As figures to be presented later will reveal, many of the church-related colleges have continued to grow even through the period of student dearth in the past decade.

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\*A report on enrollment trends in church-related colleges and universities prepared by Earl J. McGrath and Richard C. Neese at the Program in Liberal Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona (November 22, 1976).

It is the studied opinion of the authors, shared by Bowen and Minter<sup>3</sup> as a result of their financial analysis of privately supported colleges, that the present condition and the future prospects of these institutions is nowhere near as precarious as some less well-informed observers have asserted. It is our opinion that the educational and fiscal health of the church-related institutions will in large part depend upon their tenacity in holding to the basic religious, spiritual, and moral principles which animated their establishment. This conviction inspired the present study to determine how well the enrollments have held up over the past decade. This attempt to gather reliable enrollment figures was complicated by several factors on which incontestable factual information was hard to obtain.

In the first place, private colleges and universities as a group, in spite of their legal control by nongovernmental bodies of lay trustees, nevertheless receive support from the state and federal treasuries. They feel increasingly coerced by public agencies into adopting policies and practices which may weaken if not nullify their peculiar purposes. Some colleges with religious influences on their goals and practices have, in order to gain public funds, attenuated their church relationship or even completely severed their formal ties with their supporting religious body. The negative effect of court decisions stemming from the First Amendment to the Constitution on the consideration of values in institutions of higher education yet remains to be studied in depth.<sup>4</sup> If strict constructions of this amendment in regard to the support of educational institutions with church relationships are continued and narrowed, it is a fair question whether the impact of state and federal practices will not in fact deprive citizens of the freedom to enjoy a religiously oriented way of life which the amendment's authors intended to protect.

In any event, it is difficult today to determine the degree of religiosity which prevails among even those institutions which continue to acknowledge their church origins and relationships. Some with a continuing deep religious commitment do not reveal this traditional affiliation and the campus policies and practices which flow from it, while others which attest with fetching publicity to their religious goals show little evidence of their church relationship in their classes, the life practices of their faculties and students, or the mores of institutional life. Hence, it is difficult to identify institutions with exactitude regarding their religious affiliation or commitments.

Second, this confusion is compounded by the fact that the information contained in the *Education Directory: Colleges and Universities 1975-76*, issued by the National Center for Education Statistics for the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, does not represent the situation in particular institutions. This publication lists, among other data, the control or affiliation of each institution. Some list themselves as state supported and controlled; several hundred affirm their control or affiliation with a particular religious

denomination; while others prefer to be considered "independent," which could be assumed to mean—in contrast to the other two groups—that they are neither controlled by, nor affiliated with, either a public agency or a church body. In fact, however, an examination of those denominating themselves as independent reveals that many continue in substance to be closely or remotely related to a supporting church body or a religious persuasion. For example, Wheaton College in Illinois and Oklahoma Christian College maintain the firmest of religious commitments and programs, and Manhattanville College in New York was founded unmistakably in the Catholic tradition; yet all three while growing in recent years prefer to be listed as independent. Hence, the exclusion of these institutions from the study by their own classification unfavorably distorts the figures on enrollments and economic well-being.

On the other hand, many institutions which largely for public relations reasons list themselves as affiliated with a specific church or religious persuasion do not exhibit in their student constituency, philanthropic support, or educational programs any deep commitment to religious bodies. Some of these institutions have been losing students for several years and consequently lower the average for the whole company of church-related colleges.

Third, enrollment trends, although one of the most significant determinants of the future well-being of an educational institution, represent only a single factor in a complex financial situation. Some small church colleges which do not—for sound educational reasons—wish to grow in size, offer superior education and remain financially healthy. They, too, tend to restrict the gains in attendance and thereby suggest that the condition of the whole enterprise of church-related institutions is actually worse than it is, or could be.

In spite of these qualifying factors, a review of enrollment trends is significant because without an adequate student body any institution is doomed to extinction. Moreover, such an analysis can reveal information of significance to those who believe that the preservation of the church-related college as part of our system of higher education is essential to the maintenance of a distinctive factor in our democratic society. If accomplishing nothing else, the resulting facts can rectify the negative attitudes among prospective students and donors caused by the repeated statements that these institutions have no future or at best, because of constantly shrinking enrollments and income, can provide only a mediocre higher education. Although this latter state of affairs is imminent in some institutions with a traditional but waning religious commitment, to suggest that the day of the church-related college has passed is not only totally misleading, it is detrimental to our unique system of higher education and harmful to a confused social order seeking a stable consensus on the values which must give meaning to a democratic society.

On these convictions, the present study began by identifying 372 colleges and universities which categorized themselves in the 1975-76 edition of the *Education Directory* as affiliated with a church body. Institutions with fewer than 250 or more than 2900 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students in the fall of 1975 were excluded on the ground that they had fiscal problems that, though not different in kind, were different in severity and complexity. Each of the presidents of these 372 institutions was asked to supply the FTE enrollment for the fall of 1965, 1975, and 1976. The response to this inquiry was exceptional with eighty-eight percent of the institutions supplying the information for the early period and ninety-two percent responding for the current academic year. Invited to comment on increases or decreases in enrollment, many presidents supplied informative, pertinent facts regarding the reasons for recent enrollment variations at their institutions.

Of the 327 responses, 201 presidents reported an increase in the number of FTE students in the decade beginning with the academic year 1965-66 and ending in 1975-76. The percentage of increase varied from a high of 500 percent in one college of 76 students in 1965 to a low of one percent in two institutions with 699 and 1564 students in 1965. The average increase for the 201 schools was thirty-five percent.

Of the 327 responses, 122 schools reported a drop in FTE enrollment for the ten-year period. The percentage of decrease varied from a high of seventy-two percent in one college of 442 students in 1965 to a low of one percent in six institutions having 1965 enrollments of 1495, 491, 816, 786, 1263, and 1414. The average decrease for the 122 schools was eighteen percent. Considering the 327 schools as a whole, enrollment increased thirteen percent during the ten-year period from the fall of 1965 to the fall of 1975.

These figures would be more meaningful if they could be compared with those in all other types of institutions for the current academic year, but unfortunately the latter figures are not yet available in definitive form. However, one noted enrollment authority, Dr. Garland G. Parker, Executive Director for Enrollment Policy and Educational Research at the University of Cincinnati, recently released preliminary findings based on a sample of 688 representative colleges and universities enrolling some 1.6 million students which suggest that college enrollment in the United States may have declined about one percent this fall (1976). Specifically, the aggregate enrollments of four-year public and private schools indicated a 2.2 percent decline. Dr. Parker said his findings came as a "surprise and a shock," and if the results are borne out by his later surveys, it will be the first time since 1951 that total collegiate enrollments will have declined. Corroboration of Parker's prediction—for the public sector at least—came at the annual meeting in November in New Orleans of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities where it was

announced that enrollment at almost half of the nation's public institutions dropped this fall. The decline came as a shock to state schools on the heels of a 9.4 percent increase last year and an expected 4.5 percent increase this fall. The church-related colleges (343 responding) of the McGrath-Neese survey reported a two percent aggregate enrollment increase for the fall of 1976. Hence, it would appear that these schools as a whole are somewhat more favored by current enrollments than their public or secularized private counterparts.<sup>5</sup>

The various reasons for the growth of church-related enrollments are complex, but the authors believed that the opinions of chief administrative officers would be as reliable as any other voice save that of students themselves. Accordingly, in the survey presidents were asked to express their views concerning the factors which accounted for increased enrollments. A number enumerated items such as increased efforts in their recruiting programs and new courses of study, but many attributed their growth to their religiously oriented purpose, the concern for moral and spiritual values exhibited in curricular offerings, and a campus life consistent with religious commitment. A selection of the president's views speaks for many others of like mind.

President Thomas F. Field of William Jewell College, a school with a Southern Baptist affiliation, for example, in speaking of the general well-being of his institution stated the following:

*In the last five years we have had capacity enrollments, with a waiting list for admission and with the highest admission standards in the state of Missouri. We have had a balanced budget and even a modest surplus over each of these years, and we have engaged in major construction during this period. We have been nationally recognized for such disparate elements of campus life as our exciting new curricular plan, "Education for Individual Achievement," and the increase in financial support by our alumni and friends.*

*We attribute the current vitality of our college to a clear sense of identity and purpose, as well as the firm resolve to achieve complete realization of who we are as a Christian college of outstanding educational quality.*

*I am convinced that the young men and women who come to our college, and the parents who send them, are genuinely concerned with the impact of Christian values on their own lives and their society. They see, in our blending of spiritual integrity with educational excellence, not only the opportunity to discipline their minds but also the chance to take a stand for something positive and good in our world.*

President Lewis Nobles of Mississippi College, another Southern Baptist institution, also emphasizes the effect of the traditional religious objectives on enrollments and fiscal soundness in his institution when he reports:

*I should like to point out that Mississippi College, as an example of one small, denominational college which has attempted to remain committed to the values of our great traditions and gifts from the past and has attempted to hold steady to our heritage in shaping the future course of the institution, can point with some degree of satisfaction that under God's leadership it has been possible for this institution in the past decade to continue to maintain a balanced budget each year (Mississippi College has not had deficit financing in forty-four years and has increased its student body by more than fifty percent in the last ten years). Correspondingly, the strength of our faculty and student body has been greatly increased, and the institution stands at the threshold of a new era in the destiny yet to unfold before it.*

At Saint John's University in Minnesota, a Catholic institution, President Michael Blecker reported that while many campuses were fluctuating severely in recent years, his institution has had an increased enrollment for each of the past twenty years. He further notes:

*The single most important reason for our growth is the desire of students to share in the learning and life-styles of the Benedictine community of monks who sponsor the college.*

At Pacific Union College in California, a Seventh-Day Adventists' school, President J.W. Cassell, Jr., observes that two hundred qualified students were denied admission this fall (1976) because they could not be accommodated and adds that "if we had adequate residence hall and laboratory facilities we would be able to increase our enrollment by approximately ten percent a year." He continues:

*I would agree with those educators who sense a trend among young people in America today to seek out those institutions of higher education that offer character education that emphasizes spiritual values.*

President Francis P. Friedl of Loras College, a Catholic institution in Iowa, joins others in expressing his belief that an emphasis on spiritual values attracts students seeking meaning in their own lives and in the human enterprise generally. In responding to our inquiry concerning enrollments, he stated:

*I agree with the comments you have received from some of the other college presidents, to the effect that a strong emphasis on values-focused programs, an emphasis on our commitment to the Catholic tradition and to our obligations as a diocesan college have struck a responsive chord not only among parents but among students as well.*

*The increasing differential between public and private tuition can no longer justify the selection of a private college simply for the privilege of "individual attention." But a sustained and pervasive commitment to Christian values and the opportunity to grow in such a climate can, and does in fact, encourage students to enroll in private colleges.*

President Friedl's further observations on the changes that have been made in the earlier rigid life patterns and practices on church-related campuses and the consequent increase in attractiveness to this generation of students are also illuminating. They are borne out from studies of the changes in student purposes, behavior, and attitudes since the turbulent days of the late 1960s. There is abundant evidence that students today continue to be disturbed about the footlessness of contemporary life and the tenuousness of our personal and public value systems. Today, however, students are seeking assistance in clarifying their own conception of the meaning of life and in joining with their fellow human beings in efforts to improve the human lot. In this vein, President Friedl remarks that

*We are in the midst of a new phenomenon in student awareness. A few years ago, it was the somewhat rigid program of the church-related college, together with a strong discipline, that encouraged parents to send their children to such colleges. Today the colleges have moved away from most of their restrictive policies both in student life and in academic choices. Regimentation is gone. In its place there is a new desire by the student to select through his own choice those values which once were imposed, which now are offered as an attractive alternative to the emptiness which he finds in secular society.*

Further evidence of church influence is supplied by President Robert A. Davis of Florida Southern College, a United Methodist institution. Out of his experience at two church-related colleges, one in North Carolina and the other in Florida, he speaks as follows:

*The quotation you cited from an article in the July 6, 1976 issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education to the effect that "young people are really hungry for spiritual values on which they can build their lives" is right on target and confirms my experience at Brevard College and the comments of persons here at Florida Southern College. During my seven year presidency at Brevard College in North Carolina, there was a growing mood of seeking for depth values around which the fabric of life could be built. There was a growing mood of seriousness and desire to get into those courses and events in the college which provided meaning. The students' response to convocation speakers who dealt with themes related to values and spiritual meaning was enthusiastic. This was reflected in*

*sustained applause for those speakers who touched on those courses in philosophy and religion, as well as other liberal arts studies, which centered around the theme of meaning and values. I believe that this wholesome trend portends for a more stable and fruitful future for our nation.*

*Much of what has been said of Brevard College can also be said of Florida Southern College. Our students are responding to those faculty members who have something to say about life, its purposes, its meaning, and its values.*

A Catholic educator, recognizing that a variety of factors have been involved in enrollment growth, contends nevertheless that a commitment to spiritual values has been a significant factor. Monsignor Anthony A. Brown of the College of Great Falls, observes:

*There is no doubt in my mind that the Catholic colleges who preserved their identity and resisted secularistic influences in the sixties succeeded in keeping their doors open for that very fact. The student mood in the seventies was an intense desire for a value system that was much more enduring than the secularistic models of the sixties such as the drug movement. It is true that better operational procedures, finance-wise, contributed to the small colleges holding their own, but it is very likely also that the students would not have been there to be managed in a financial way or any other way if the private system did not offer a value-oriented environment.*

And lastly, the testimony of Gerson D. Cohen, Chancellor of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America (New York) which operates four post-secondary schools—one of which is an undergraduate liberal arts institution, the Seminary College of Jewish Studies—stresses the need to provide a moral and spiritual basis for intellectual development:

*The Seminary College thus treads a middle ground between a university atmosphere and a religious community. Synthesizing the two must necessarily give rise to a certain tension, but we believe it is a healthy and creative tension. Maintaining academic excellence and providing a grounding in moral and spiritual values is a critical need in American education today, and we take pride in the success which the Seminary College has had in that endeavor.*

These testimonials from the chief officers among 197 colleges and universities which sustained growths of from 1 to 550 students in the fall of 1976 and another group of 201 institutions which grew over the ten-year period from 1965 to 1975 in percentages of 1 to 500 while many other institutions—even those with low-tuition fees, such as the state universities—were shrinking in size,

strongly suggest that the armchair opinion which readily prophesies the demise of the church-related and religiously-oriented college because they cannot attract students needs to be modified in the light of the facts. Doubtless some will close or be absorbed by another institution. Indeed, the combination of some specialized services which place a heavy financial burden on colleges with limited resources and enrollments should be encouraged—especially among institutions with compatible religious goals. Present social trends and attitudes among our people suggest that the large majority of church-related colleges if they genuinely attempt to implement their spiritual commitments in the daily life of the campus—in classes and outside—will not only survive, but with prudent management of their resources will flourish.

It must be observed at this point that from 1970 to 1974 some seventy-one privately supported colleges and universities did have to close their doors, merge with another school, or become public institutions.<sup>6</sup> Of these, thirty-seven (some fifty-two percent) claimed a church affiliation. Many of these colleges, however, had never had large enrollments, and when they went out of existence, thirty-eight percent had fewer than two hundred students. Under the conditions of economic, social, or religious life that have come to prevail in our society, these institutions could not remain viable and offer a quality higher education. The data in the present study admittedly suggest that some additional institutions with a church or religious affiliation, like their secular sister institutions, will close or merge their efforts and resources. The figures also indicate that many church-affiliated colleges and universities, though they must intensify their efforts to attract more gifts and more students, seem in no danger of failing.

Moreover, although detailed facts are not available concerning the degree to which their religious affiliation and commitments are actually reflected in the instructional programs and the life-style of the campus, the evidence thoroughly suggests that those institutions in which religion is a genuine force are faring better than those which have succumbed to the secularization widespread in our culture and in the enterprise of higher education at large. This conclusion is supported by a study done by Robert Pace for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education reported under the title, *Education and Evangelism: A Profile of Protestant Colleges*. In the introduction to that volume, Clark Kerr, Chairman of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, interprets Pace's findings as follows:

*Pace finds the evangelical-fundamentalist colleges in some ways outside the mainstream of social change, at least as it is understood by students in the nation's colleges and universities. Yet, because of the strong assistance they receive from those who financially and spiritually support their educational philosophy, their future looks secure. So, ironically, does the future of colleges with very loose ties*

*to their supporting church, and which are in some ways more liberal than avowedly nonsectarian liberal arts colleges. Perhaps in greatest difficulty are those mainline denominational colleges that do not now seem committed to either a strong religious philosophy or a strong academic program.<sup>7</sup>*

Several factors analyzed in the Pace study deserve specific comment. He discovered that the evangelical colleges are "undifferentiated from mainline Protestant colleges with regard to scholarship and awareness, a fact indicating that education and evangelism are not incompatible." Thus the common assumption that the colleges which have clearly defined religious goals and programs consistent with them are academically inferior either in their drawing power among high-school graduates or their internal scholastic standards is false. Corroboratory evidence for this statement can be found at such institutions as Wheaton College (Illinois) where religious commitments have controlled all major policies and practices for years. The Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for the class entering Wheaton in the fall of 1976 testify to the quality of Wheaton students. This class averaged 1175 while the national average was only 945. Further evidence of the drawing power of the kind of values-oriented program which Wheaton provides is exhibited in the fact that over 400 qualified students had to be denied admission in the fall of 1976 because they could not be accommodated.

Practically, what the findings of Pace's study amount to is the conclusion that in terms of the common intellectual standards applied in the enterprise of higher education to determine "excellence," the evangelical colleges on the average rate as high as their sister institutions. There is no evidence to indicate, therefore, that in these institutions a concern with piety is necessarily accompanied by a neglect of intellect.

Moreover, Pace found that the evangelical colleges score higher than others on being more friendly and supportive and very high on measures of general decorum and regard for rules as well as on leadership and effort toward pragmatic goals. Some of these latter characteristics—respect for rules, for example—have in recent years been markedly missing on many campuses. In fact, some institutions have abandoned so many regulations governing standards of academic performance and social behavior that the campus surpasses the chaos of the extramural world. When the total educational impact of an institution is taken into consideration—rather than limiting its functions to narrowly conceived intellectual training—these evangelical colleges have a clear distinction.

A large number of the institutions included in this study reflect the soundness of Pace's conclusion that the evangelical colleges' future looks secure. The institutions associated with the Southern Baptist Convention, for example, have

fares well in enrollments over the past decade. Of thirty institutions reporting in the current study, the percentage of increase in enrollment from the fall of 1965 to the fall of 1975 was thirty-one percent during a period when student bodies were shrinking in many other institutions. Financially, too, it appears that a loyal constituency has eased the monetary problems of the Southern Baptist colleges that have been so conspicuous and disruptive in many other institutions.<sup>8</sup> These facts tend to bear out the contention that in these days of social confusion and vagueness about the goals of living, the church-related college is becoming increasingly attractive to prospective constituencies.

What about the eighty-one colleges and universities in the study which dropped considerably (over ten percent) in enrollment over the past decade? The success of their prospering sister institutions suggests that a careful analysis be made of the causes of their failure to sustain their earlier drawing power. Such a study should focus first on the strength and pervasiveness of their religious commitment and its concrete manifestation in purposes and programs.

Other factors of institutional life involved in falling attendance at the church-related colleges doubtless include ineffective administrative leadership, strained relationships with the related church body, a poorly organized and inadequately supported recruiting effort, ineffective marketing procedures designed to bring the institution's program to the attention of prospective students and donors, and the failure of the administration and staff to envisage new programs appealing to today's high-school graduates. It should be noted in passing that thirty of the eighty-one colleges mentioned above that lost ten percent or more of their student bodies during the ten-year period increased their enrollments by seventeen percent from the fall of 1975 to the fall of 1976 and, as an aggregate, the eighty-one schools reported a student increase of four percent for the fall of 1976.

One thing is certain. In the days ahead, with the falling birth rates of recent years beginning to be reflected in college age groups and the recent tendency of some alienated youth in these groups not to pursue their formal education beyond high school, competition for students will be intensified. Moreover, it should not be concluded that simply because enrollments continue to increase that the institution will not need other forms of income. One of the principal purposes of this analysis is to refute the notion among potential donors that financial aid to the church-related college is a poor investment because it is in danger of closing for want of students. The fact is that with larger resources in the form of gifts—and particularly scholarship assistance—these institutions could easily draw a larger percentage of the college-going population. Persons of the related denominations and church bodies themselves ought to be encouraged by the facts revealed in this analysis to contribute more generously to the support of their own institutions of higher education. Several church groups

have already undertaken comprehensive studies of their colleges and universities with the double purpose of determining the relationship between religious commitment and practice and the character of institutional policies and practices, and the financial condition of their constituent institutions. Such studies are now in progress under the auspices of the National Commission of United Methodist Higher Education and the National Colloquium on Christian Education of the Southern Baptist Convention.<sup>9</sup> The results of these inquiries seem destined to reveal the effect of Christian commitment on all aspects of life in these church-related institutions and at the same time should stimulate added support by their respective constituencies.

The church-related colleges will have to represent an attractive option to young people if they hope to continue to compete successfully. In some respects they cannot—nor should they try to—match the services offered by the large universities with low-tuition fees. But although today's students seem preoccupied with vocational training (as well they might be with unemployment and high inflation affecting even those with a college education), many are also disenchanted with the materialism, the callous indifference of our society to the human condition, the unconcern for the individual, and the lack of any sense of direction in our society. They are troubled about the confusion of shifting values by which our people live. They are discomforted by the failure of adults and their organizations—the churches, the schools, the government, the family—to give them assistance in interpreting the meaning of life and in thinking through a philosophy by which they can shape their own attitudes and govern their conduct.

Teaching and campus mores may have been too rigidly doctrinaire in the past to suit the taste of today's youth, but it is obvious that campuses have changed notably in this respect in recent years. Colleges now offer considerable freedom to the student in examining his own life and the life of society in terms of modern knowledge and social change. If true to their heritage and the needs of our day, these colleges can provide instruction both formal and informal which relates the wisdom of the Judeo-Christian-Hellenic tradition to the pressing issues and problems of our day. It is this kind of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual experience that many young people today earnestly seek. The church-related or religiously oriented college or university which provides such help and otherwise manages its community life with concern for the freedom, dignity, and well-being of its patrons will not disappear. It will flourish and at the same time provide the type of experience for our young people—and increasingly for older citizens—without which our culture will go the way of so many others from Greece to the modern nations. These laudable goals the church-related colleges cannot accomplish by themselves. They need the moral and financial assistance of all citizens who wish to see our nation rise again to new heights of humane living, united and stabilized around a generally accepted set of convictions concerning the nature and destiny of man.

What can the thoughtful American do to assure the survival and educational quality of the church-related college or university? He (and she) can, as an active citizen, see that laws are passed that directly assist young people who would choose such an institution if the charges to them were equalized with the charges at other schools—especially public institutions. He can, through his church aid, directly provide financial support to assure a high quality of academic performance at these institutions. He can take his children to campuses to investigate the quality of life and the concern for moral and spiritual values among the administrators and staff. He can refute the loose talk in social groups about the inferior quality and the prospective disappearance of the church-related institution. By doing these things he may be helping to sustain our dual system of higher education and the flexibility it has preserved not only in education but in the whole of American culture.

## CITATIONS AND COMMENTS

<sup>1</sup>The most comprehensive study of church-related higher education remains *Church-Sponsored Higher Education in the United States: Report of the Danforth Commission* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1966) by Manning Pattillo, Jr., and Donald Mackenzie. A decade of state and federal pressure on many of the church-related colleges to secularize their boards of control and policies as a condition of grants in financial aid has doubtless modified the lengthy list that Pattillo and Mackenzie assembled. Hence, for the present survey, the authors decided to choose their sample from the current edition (1975-76) of the federal *Education Directory*—specifically from those private senior colleges and universities willing, or able, to make a self-declaration of their church's or religious affiliation.

<sup>2</sup>The earlier figure for fall 1951 appears in W. Vance Grant and C. George Lind, *Digest of Educational Statistics 1974* (Washington, D.C.: The National Center for Education Statistics, 1975), p. 75; the latter statistic for 1974 is found in *The Condition of Education 1976: A Statistical Report on the Condition of Education in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The National Center for Education Statistics, 1976), p. 183.

<sup>3</sup>Howard R. Bowen and W. John Minter, *Private Higher Education: First Annual Report on Financial and Educational Trends in the Private Sector of American Higher Education* (Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges, 1975). On pp. 78-79, Bowen and Minter report:

*This study does not confirm the frequently asserted opinion that most private colleges and universities are essentially defunct and on their way to oblivion. . . . One of the themes that recurs throughout this study is that the private colleges and universities have enormous staying power. They are still a viable and sturdy part of the American system of higher education. The disaster that has been so widely predicted has not yet befallen most private institutions.*

<sup>4</sup>A noteworthy examination of the First Amendment question has recently been prepared by the National Commission on United Methodist Higher Education under the title, *Endangered Service: Independent Colleges, Public Policy and the First Amendment* (Nashville: National Commission on United Methodist Higher Education, 1976).

<sup>5</sup>The almost-final reckoning by the federal government's National Center for Education Statistics estimated that the fall enrollment for fall 1976 was down 0.7 percent from the previous fall (11,290,719 full- and part-time students enrolled in the fall of 1975 compared to 11,215,111 for the fall of 1976).

Private colleges and universities gained 0.8 percent in total enrollment, while public institutions lost 1.1 percent. See Jack Magarrell, "Number of Students Declines for First Time Since 1951," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 22, 1977, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup>"Private Colleges That Have Closed, Merged, or 'Gone Public' in the '70s," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (August 5, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>C. Robert Pace, *Education and Evangelism: A Profile of Protestant Colleges* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972), pp. xii-xiii.

<sup>8</sup>For a twenty-year summary of the Southern Baptist's higher education enterprise, see Ben C. Fisher, "Overview of Southern Baptist Higher Education 1951-1971," in *The Southern Baptist Educator* (November-December, 1973), pp. 3-13.

<sup>9</sup>The National Commission on United Methodist Higher Education was established in January 1975 and will expire in June 1977. To date, four significant publications examining the involvement of this Church and its colleges and universities in higher education have appeared: *A College-Related Church: United Methodist Perspectives; Toward 2000: Perspectives on the Environment for United Methodist and Independent Higher Education; To Give the Key of Knowledge: United Methodists and Education, 1784-1976*; and, *Endangered Service: Independent Colleges, Public Policy and the First Amendment*; all published in 1976.

The Southern Baptist's National Colloquium on Christian Education (addressing the theme, "Looking to the Third Century with Confidence") met at Williamsburg, Virginia in June 1976 for the first of a triennial series of examinations of the role of Southern Baptist colleges and universities in American higher education.

Currently forty-nine junior and senior colleges of the Southern Baptist Convention are participating in a detailed examination of their programs being conducted by Earl J. McGrath and his associates at the Program in Liberal Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721.

**Survey of 372 Church-Related, Four-Year Liberal Arts Colleges and  
Universities in the United States with 1975 FTE Enrollments  
of 250 to 2900 students:**

**Aggregate full-time-equivalent (FTE) enrollment 1965 compared to 1975:**

| 1965    | 1975    | #       | %*  | (n) number of institutions reporting |
|---------|---------|---------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 287,052 | 324,124 | +37,144 | +13 | 327 (88% of 372)                     |

**FTE enrollment 1965 compared to 1975 according to religious affiliation:**

|                                         | 1965  | 1975  | #      | %*  | t  | #gaining | #losing |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-----|----|----------|---------|
| Protestant Episcopal                    | 2404  | 4094  | + 1690 | +70 | 4  | 4        | 0       |
| Assemblies of God                       | 1916  | 2810  | + 894  | +47 | 4  | 4        | 0       |
| Baptists                                | 7050  | 9745  | + 2695 | +38 | 9  | 8        | 1       |
| Southern Baptists                       | 30554 | 39941 | + 9387 | +31 | 30 | 25       | 5       |
| Seventh-Day<br>Adventists               | 5913  | 7474  | + 1561 | +26 | 7  | 5        | 2       |
| Mennonite Church                        | 2325  | 2782  | + 457  | +20 | 3  | 3        | 0       |
| Roman Catholic                          | 73069 | 86120 | +13051 | +18 | 95 | 55       | 40      |
| Free Methodist                          | 1940  | 2227  | + 287  | +15 | 3  | 2        | 1       |
| American Lutheran                       | 8891  | 10095 | + 1204 | +14 | 6  | 5        | 1       |
| Christian Church<br>Disciples of Christ | 2818  | 3112  | + 294  | +10 | 3  | 2        | 1       |
| Lutheran Church<br>in America           | 14683 | 15672 | + 989  | + 7 | 12 | 7        | 5       |
| Presbyterian, U.S.                      | 7677  | 8116  | + 439  | + 6 | 11 | 7        | 4       |
| Friends                                 | 4678  | 4939  | + 261  | + 6 | 6  | 4        | 2       |
| Church of the<br>Brethren               | 3839  | 3853  | + 14   | 0   | 4  | 2        | 2       |
| United Methodist                        | 57826 | 57561 | - 265  | 0   | 57 | 26       | 31      |
| United Church of<br>Christ              | 3617  | 3524  | - 93   | - 3 | 5  | 2        | 3       |
| American Baptist                        | 3881  | 3643  | - 238  | - 6 | 5  | 2        | 3       |
| United Presbyterian,<br>U.S.A.          | 19279 | 18020 | - 1259 | - 7 | 19 | 8        | 11      |
| Church of the<br>Nazarene               | 6622  | 5950  | - 672  | -10 | 6  | 3        | 3**     |
| Others                                  | 28070 | 34446 | + 6376 | +23 | 38 | 29       | 9       |

\*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

\*\*If two Nazarene colleges founded in the late '60s were included for the ten-year period, aggregate enrollment for the Nazarene colleges would have increased by 660 for a nine percent gain.

**Aggregate full-time-equivalent (FTE) enrollment 1975 compared to 1976:**

| 1975    | 1976    | #      | %* | (n) number of institutions reporting |
|---------|---------|--------|----|--------------------------------------|
| 338,365 | 345,717 | +7,352 | +2 | 343 (92% of 372)                     |

**FTE enrollment 1975 compared to 1976 according to religious affiliation:**

|                             | 1975  | 1976  | #     | %*  | n  | #gaining | #losing |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|----|----------|---------|
| Church of the Nazarene      | 5950  | 6812  | + 862 | +14 | 6  | 5        | 1       |
| American Baptist            | 3643  | 3906  | + 263 | + 7 | 5  | 2        | 3       |
| Seventh-Day Adventists      | 7474  | 7811  | + 337 | + 4 | 7  | 5        | 2       |
| Roman Catholic              | 87471 | 90833 | +3362 | + 4 | 97 | 57       | 39**    |
| Church of the Brethren      | 3853  | 3963  | + 110 | + 3 | 4  | 3        | 1       |
| United Presbyterian, U.S.A. | 19632 | 20106 | + 474 | + 2 | 22 | 8        | 14      |
| United Methodist            | 58665 | 60039 | +1374 | + 2 | 58 | 39       | 19      |
| Lutheran Church in America  | 16351 | 16680 | + 319 | + 2 | 13 | 4        | 9       |
| Friends                     | 4939  | 4992  | + 53  | + 1 | 6  | 3        | 2**     |
| Free Methodists             | 2227  | 2249  | + 22  | + 1 | 3  | 2        | 1       |
| Assemblies of God           | 2810  | 2831  | + 21  | + 1 | 4  | 2        | 2       |
| Southern Baptist            | 44403 | 44729 | + 326 | + 1 | 34 | 20       | 13**    |
| Christian Church            |       |       |       |     |    |          |         |
| Disciples of Christ         | 3497  | 3501  | + 4   | 0   | 4  | 2        | 2       |
| Baptists                    | 9745  | 9684  | - 61  | - 1 | 9  | 6        | 3       |
| Presbyterian, U.S.          | 9386  | 9326  | - 60  | - 1 | 12 | 5        | 7       |
| American Lutheran           | 11278 | 11205 | - 73  | - 1 | 7  | 3        | 4       |
| Protestant Episcopal        | 4094  | 4055  | - 39  | - 1 | 4  | 2        | 2       |
| United Church of Christ     | 4518  | 4436  | - 82  | - 2 | 6  | 4        | 2       |
| Mennonite Church            | 2782  | 2680  | - 102 | - 4 | 3  | 1        | 2       |
| ***Others                   | 35637 | 35879 | + 242 | + 1 | 39 | 24       | 14**    |

\*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

\*\*The enrollment in one college remained unchanged.

\*\*\*Others (religious groups with two colleges or less reporting) include: African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Brethren Church, Brethren in Christ Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Christian Missionary Alliance, Christian Reformed Church, Church of Christ, Church of God (Anderson, IN; Cleveland, TN; Findlay, OH), Evangelical Covenant Church of America, Friends United Meeting, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren, Moravian Church, Reformed Church in America, Reformed Presbyterian, Reorganized Latter-Day Saints, United Brethren Church, Wesleyan, Interdenominational, Multiple Protestant Denominations.

## STATISTICAL SUMMARY\*

Number of church-related senior colleges and universities with enrollments of 250-2900 surveyed: 372.

### FTE Enrollment:

| Fall 1965 | Fall 1975 | #       | %*  | (n) number of institutions reporting |
|-----------|-----------|---------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 287,052   | 324,124   | +37,144 | +13 | 327 (88% of 372)                     |
| Fall 1975 | Fall 1976 | #       | %*  | (n) number of institutions reporting |
| 338,365   | 345,717   | + 7,352 | + 2 | 343 (92% of 372)                     |

Of the 327 colleges reporting for the 1965-1975 period, 201 (61% of 327) gained students, 122 (37% of 327) lost students, and 4 (1% of 327) remained unchanged.

Taken by themselves, the 201 colleges reported an aggregate enrollment increase of 35 percent (+57,937 students) over the ten-year period from 165,924 students for fall 1965 to 223,861 students for fall 1975.

On the other hand, the 122 schools reported an aggregate enrollment loss of 18 percent (-20,893 students) over the ten-year period from 118,383 students for fall 1965 to 97,490 students for fall 1975.

Of the 122 colleges reporting a loss of students, 81 (66% of 122 or 25% of 327) sustained enrollment losses of 10 percent or more from 74,557 students for fall 1965 to 58,202 students for fall 1975: an aggregate loss of 16,355 students (22%).

However, of the 81 schools losing enrollments of 10% or more for the ten-year period, 30 (37% of 81) reported enrollment increases of 5% or more for fall 1976 from 20,270 students for fall 1975 to 23,671 students for fall 1976: an aggregate increase of 17 percent.

Further, as an aggregate, the 81 colleges that lost 10% or more of their enrollments from the fall of 1965 to the fall of 1975 reported an increase of 4% from 58,202 students (fall 1975) to 60,689 students (fall 1976).

Of the 343 colleges reporting for the 1975-1976 period, 197 (57% of 343) gained students, 142 (41% of 343) lost students, and 4 (1% of 343) remained unchanged.

Taken by themselves, the 197 colleges reported an aggregate enrollment increase

of 7 percent (+13,251 students) during the one-year period from 195,672 students for fall 1975 to 208,923 students for fall 1976.

On the other hand, the 142 schools reported an aggregate enrollment loss of 4 percent (-5,799 students) during the one-year period from 139,378 students for fall 1975 to 133,579 students for fall 1976.

\*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

Publications of the Higher Education Program  
College of Education  
University of Arizona

1. Monographs

*Institutional Efficiency in State Systems of Public Higher Education*, by Fred F. Harclerod. Price: \$3.00.

*The Regional State Colleges and Universities in the Middle 1970's*, by Fred F. Harclerod, C. Theodore Molen Jr., Suzanne Van Ort. Price: \$3.00.

*Changing Patterns of Governance in Higher Education*, by John J. Corson, Marvin D. Johnson, T. Harry McKinney, John D. Millett and Allan W. Ostar. Price: \$3.00.

*Council of Universities and Colleges: An Introductory History*, by Doris Meek, Don A. Morgan. Price: \$3.00.

2. Topical Papers

No. 1—*Evaluating Higher Education*, by C. Robert Pace. Price: \$2.00.

No. 2—*Values and American Higher Education*, by Earl J. McGrath. Price: \$2.00.

No. 3—*Lifelong Learning Higher Education's Response*, by Raymond E. Schultz. Price: \$2.00.

No. 4—*Public Policy and Higher Education*, by John J. Corson. Price: \$2.00.

No. 5—*Will There Be a Community College in the Year 2000?*, by Arthur M. Cohen. Price: \$2.00.